

## 2.3 Zoning

The Route 6 study area contains a mix of zoning districts, including both residential and non-residential, which are illustrated in Figure 5. These zoning districts include four residential districts and one commercial district. The commercial zone encompasses the majority of properties in this area and is designated as CI: Commercial/Industrial. This zone permits a range of retail and service businesses and also allows day care service centers. Uses allowed by special permit include light industrial uses, a variety of community facilities, fire station, athletic club and recreational facilities. This zone accounts for 149 acres of the total study area.

The residential districts allow single family homes. The residential zoning designations in this area are the R-20, R-30, R-40 and R-80 zones, which have minimum lot size requirements of 20,000 s.f., 30,000 s.f., 40,000 s.f. and 80,000 s.f. respectively. These districts account for 106 acres of the total study area.

## 2.4 Landscape and Environmental Features

Natural wetland areas and vegetation are critical in reducing storm water run-off. The protection of these areas will assist in controlling storm water. One of the major wetland areas in the study area is concentrated along the north eastern part of the Stony Hill Golf Center site, extending to the Fire Department Site and continuing further south along Weed Road. While partially limiting the development of some properties these wetland areas also present a significant opportunity for the introduction of trails and preservation of natural features. Figure 6 illustrates the location of wetlands, streams and water bodies within the site area. Currently, there is an existing pond and a fountain along Route 6 on the Stony Hill Golf Center site. Landscaped setbacks and woodlands provide a desirable setting for the existing development in the study area.



Single Family residential lots



Landscaped open spaces at Stony Hill development Site

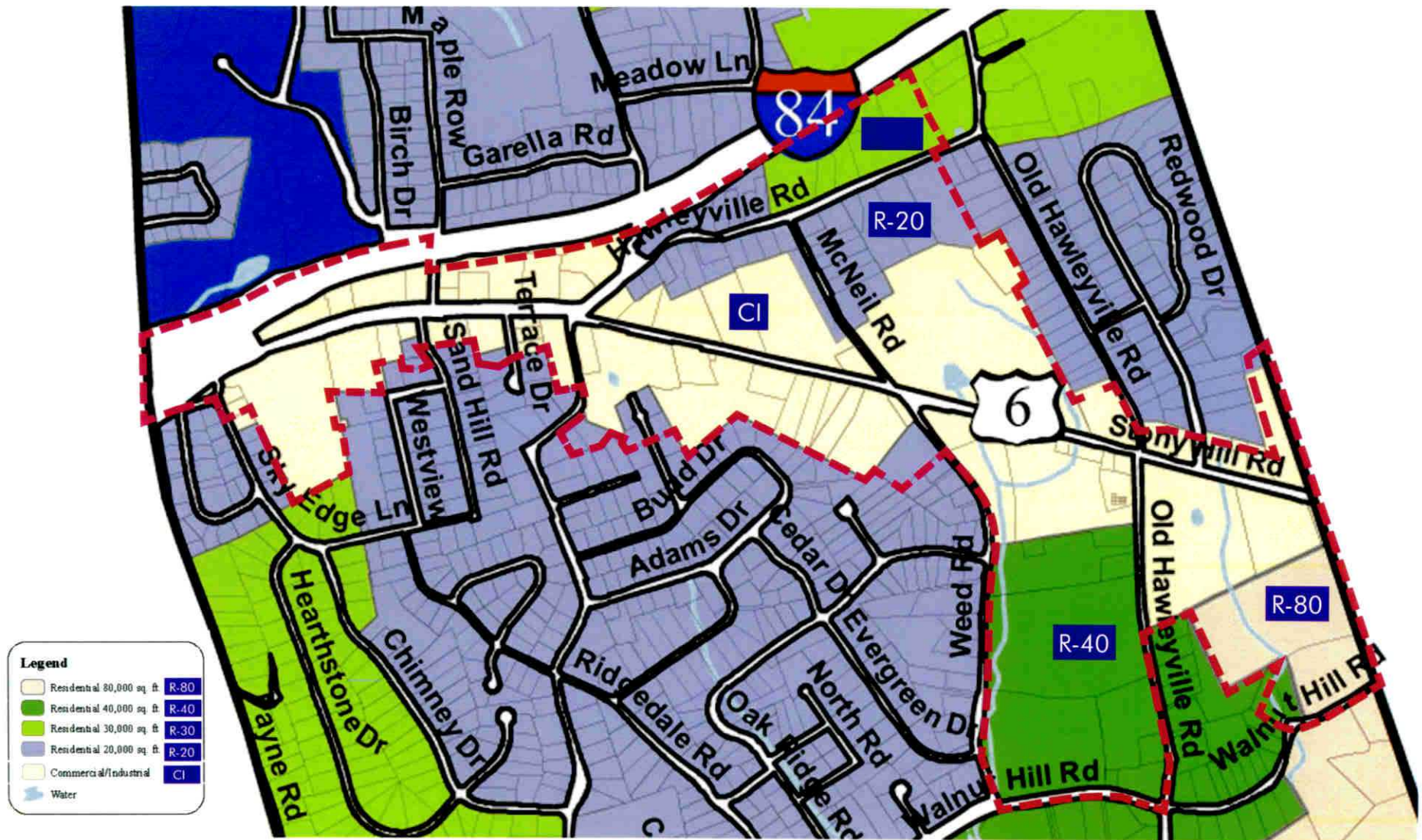


FIGURE 5: ZONING MAP



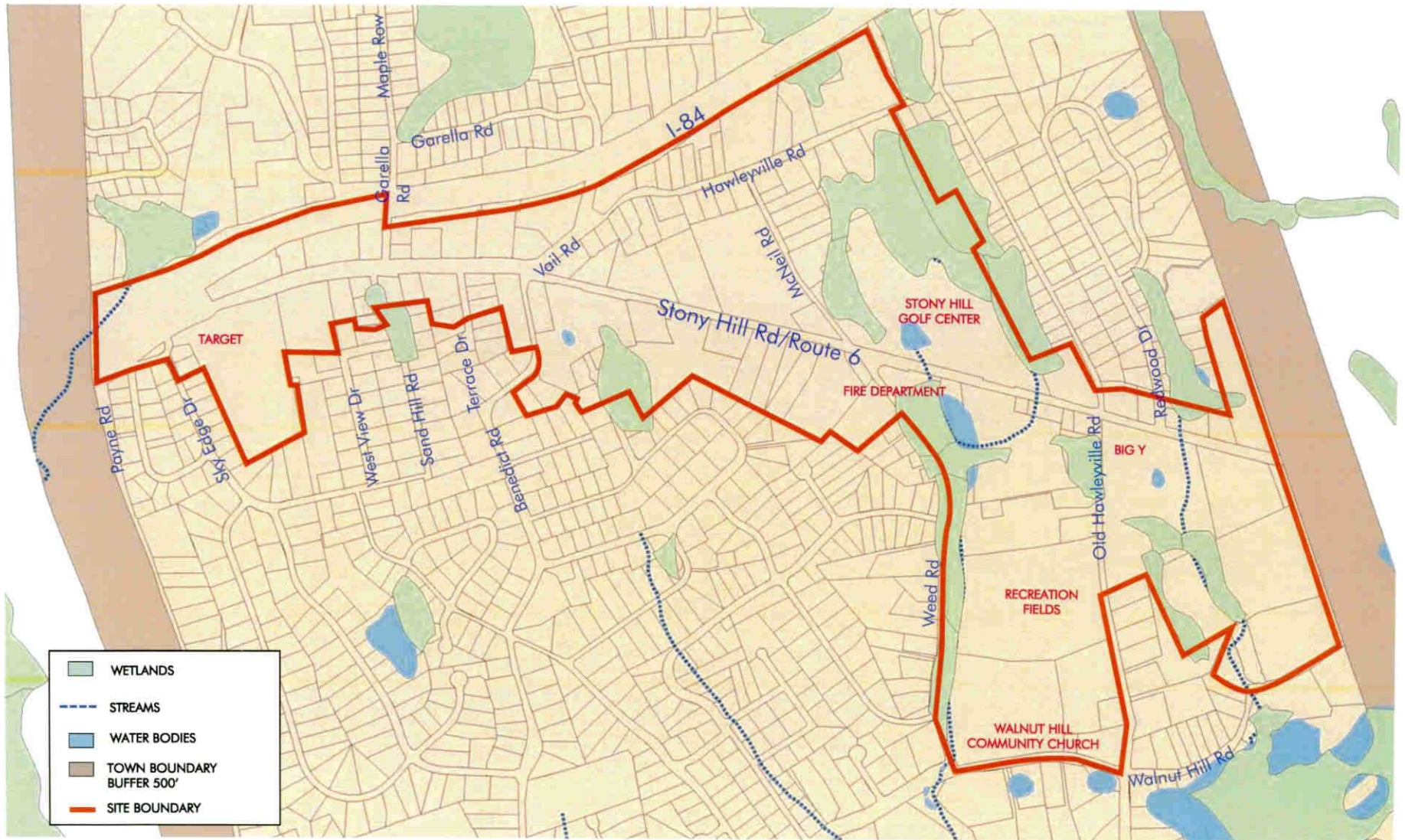


FIGURE 6: NATURAL CONSTRAINTS

## 2.5 Transportation

Route 6 is known as Stony Hill Road and is designated by CONN DOT as a minor arterial roadway. For most of its length through Bethel Route 6 is a two-lane road; but for the section between Old Hawleyville Road and the Newtown line the road has been widened to four lanes as a result of the Big Y development.

Traffic signals occur at six locations within the corridor, as shown in Figure 7:

- at the Payne Road intersection at the west entry point to the corridor
- entrance drive to Target
- intersection with Sand Hill Road and Garella Road
- Intersection with Vail/Hawleyville/Benedict Road
- Intersection with Old Hawleyville Road
- Intersection at Big Y

Traffic volumes estimated in 2005 by CONN DOT indicated that daily traffic figures were quite high (at 48,100) at the Danbury line but declined as Route 6 moved eastward, dropping to about 20,700 between Sky Edge Drive and Sand Hill Road, 15,100 from there to Benedict Road, 12,000 from there to Old Hawleyville Road and 9,000 from Old Hawleyville Road to the Newtown Town line. Traffic congestion is most prevalent along the western section of Route 6, primarily between Payne Road and the Benedict/Hawleyville Road intersections. Traffic tie-ups also occur when the road acts as a "by-pass" to I-84 when accidents or other incidents encourage drivers to leave the Interstate freeway at exits within Danbury or Newtown.

Traffic flow is also impaired by the numerous driveways and curb cuts that provide ingress and egress into the developed properties along Route 6. Industrial parcels have at least one curb cut; in some instances there are two. These access points create the potential for conflicting turning movements, especially for left turn movements that cross a lane of on-coming traffic.

Accident data recorded by the Town over the last one and a half years include a total of 5 injury crashes, 14 possible injury (claims of non-evident injury) crashes and 103 no injury crashes. A majority of 65% of the crashes occurred at



Intersection of Garella Road and Route 6



Intersection of Old Hawleyville Road and Route 6



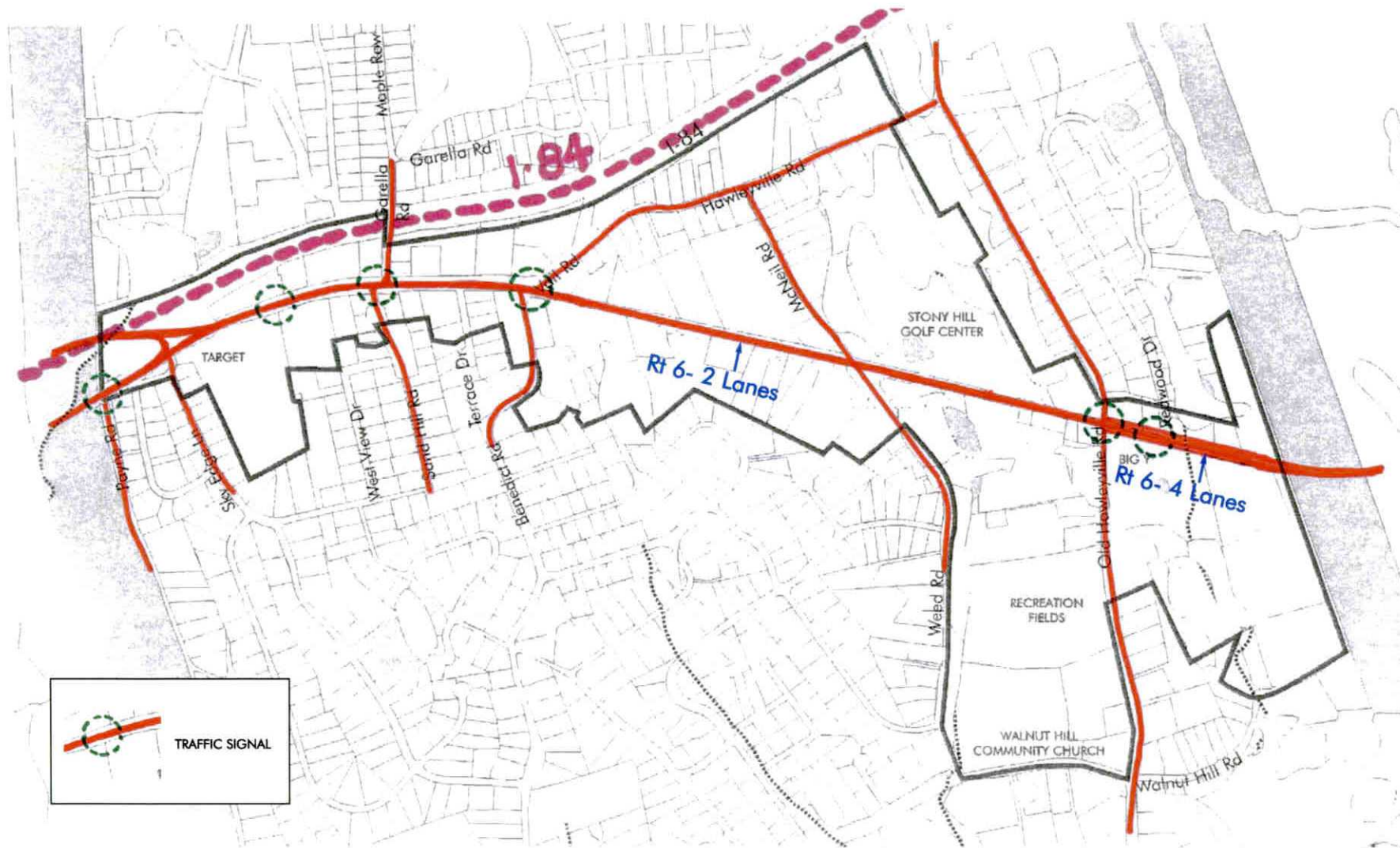


FIGURE 7: ROAD ACCESS MAP

intersections, primarily at the intersection of Route 6 and Sand Hill Road (approximately 14 crashes).

## 2.6 Water and Sewer Systems

There is no public water service area within the Route 6 Corridor study area in Bethel. Bethel Consolidated Water Company, a private utility company provides water service to the parcels within this study area. As noted in the 2007 POCD, actions for protection of Bethel's water supply include creating local watershed protection regulations, a water supply overlay zone and implementing the recommendations of the water supply study report.

The municipal sewer mains located within the Town of Bethel is maintained by the Town's Public Works Department. Based on an Inter-local Agreement the Town sends its municipal sewage to the City of Danbury's treatment facility. The location of site utilities and drainage within our study area are illustrated in Figure 8, indicating the main sewer line that serves all the parcels in the study area.

## 2.7 Summary

The existing uses and conditions within the study area are summarized in Figure 9. Key features within the one and a half mile corridor area include:

- A broad mix of commercial uses that front on to Route 6 including retail, office, restaurant and hotel/motel buildings.
- Large-scale new development that includes two major retail stores: the Target store and the Big Y Supermarket.
- Non-commercial uses include residential development on the north side of the study area and the Walnut Hill Community Church to the south.



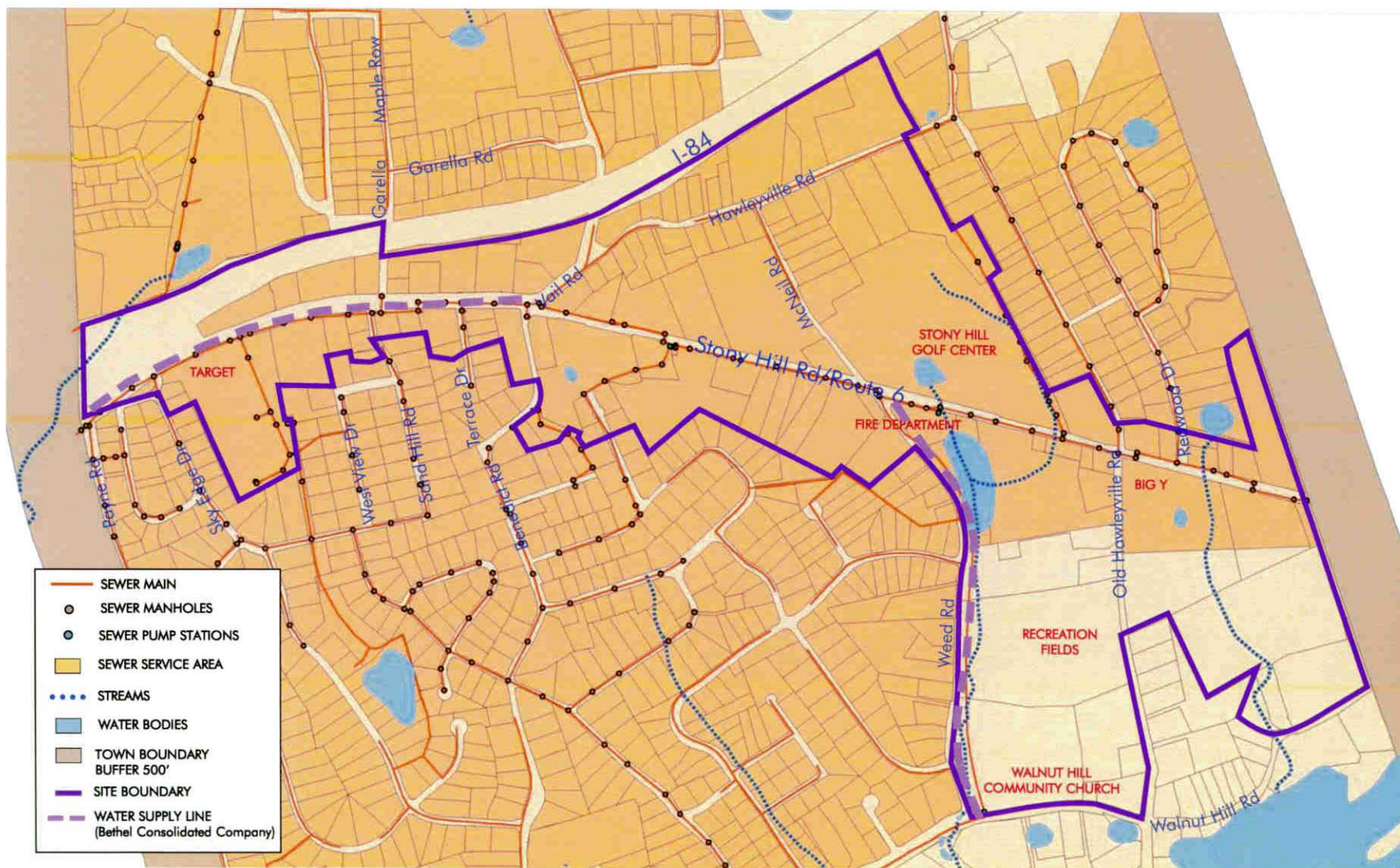


FIGURE 8: WATER &amp; SEWER SYSTEMS

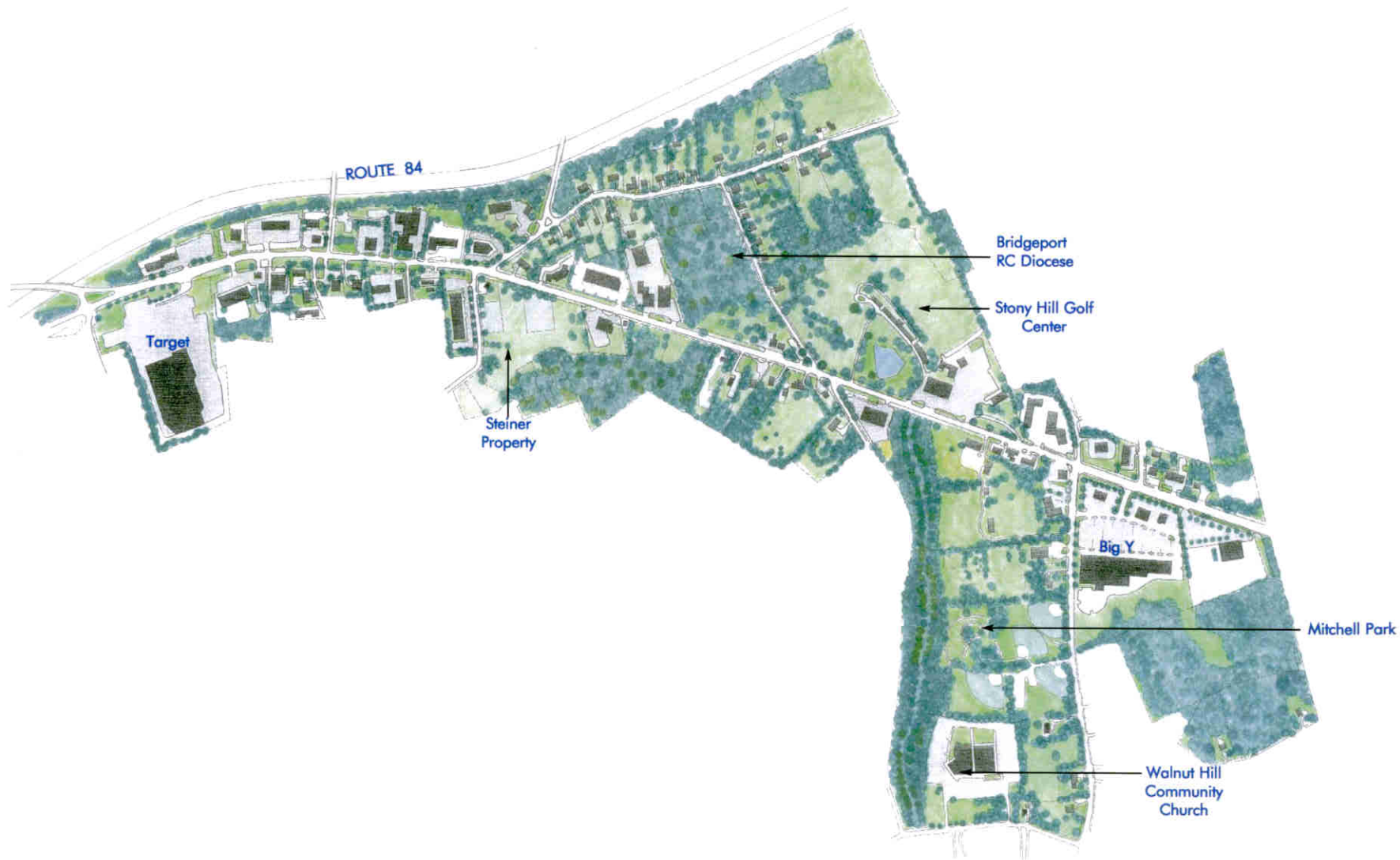


FIGURE 9: EXISTING DEVELOPMENT



- Significant undeveloped parcels include the Stony Hill Inn and Steiner properties and land owned by the Bridgeport Roman Catholic Diocese.
- Existing woodlands, wetland areas and landscaped setbacks provide an attractive setting for much of the existing development in the corridor.
- The existing streetscape provides a very varied image with pedestrian amenities limited to a few fragmentary lengths of sidewalk.
- The numerous driveways on Route 6 contribute to the frequent traffic congestion that occurs during peak travel hours.

### 3.0 Market Analysis of Alternative Uses

#### 3.1 Economic Trends

Located in the Danbury Labor Market Area (LMA), the Town of Bethel is well situated to share in the growth potential of one of Connecticut's more dynamic regional markets. Although employment declined in the Danbury LMA between 2000 and 2002, more than all of the job loss was attributable to a shrinking manufacturing sector. Since 2003, job recovery has been evident in the overall economy, raising employment levels to 67,869 by 2005. Yet throughout the 2000-2005 period, eight private sectors grew continuously, ranked in descending order of importance:

- Arts, Entertainment & Recreation, by 30.2%
- Educational Services, by 26%
- Wholesale Trade, by 21.3%
- Health Care & Social Assistance, by 12.3%
- Management of Companies, by 4%, and
- Retail Trade, by 2.4%

As Table 1 shows for 5,000 firms located in the LMA, the largest concentration of employment in the region's economy now stands in retail trade and health care/social assistance. Leading hospitals and regional malls are at the forefront of economic development. Within these sectors, the 500 establishments of the following industries employed more than 2,000 workers per sub-sector:

- Hospitals
- Ambulatory health care services
- Food and beverage stores
- Nursing and residential care facilities
- General merchandise stores



Although other significant job sectors include manufacturing and government, their declining job prospects or tax exemption make them less advantageous as targets for development. Collectively, in 2005, employers in the Danbury LMA paid over \$3.3 billion in annual wages, or \$48,428 per worker, which represented an increase of 13 percent in average wages over 2000.

**Table 1: Regional Employment Trends: Annual Average Employment of the Danbury Labor Market Area, 2000-2005**

	Average Annual Employment					
	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	30	31	32	21	22	24
Mining	25	32	34	35	36	38
Utilities	101	84	93	83	71	70
Construction	3,531	3,413	3,147	3,070	3,054	3,121
Manufacturing	9,322	9,725	10,256	11,375	12,221	12,604
Wholesale trade	2,682	2,543	2,367	2,270	2,241	2,212
Retail trade	11,728	12,113	11,896	11,481	11,063	11,457
Transportation and warehousing	1,060	1,062	1,091	1,146	1,194	1,254
Information	1,381	1,537	1,744	1,988	2,034	2,219
Finance and insurance	2,697	2,553	2,617	2,628	2,593	2,704
Real estate and rental and leasing	609	589	595	615	617	629
Professional and technical services	2,501	2,418	2,482	2,604	2,780	2,863
Management of companies and enterprises	2,903	2,726	2,560	2,619	2,883	2,791
Administrative and waste management	3,095	3,154	3,023	3,315	3,331	3,491
Educational services	800	751	693	664	632	635
Health care and social assistance	10,377	10,044	9,875	9,720	9,193	9,243
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	771	774	759	805	709	592
Accommodation and food services	4,377	4,375	4,420	4,326	4,226	4,056
Other services, except public administration	2,354	2,358	2,406	2,367	2,279	2,193
Total government	7,509	7,363	7,457	7,594	7,271	7,096
Total	67,869	67,657	67,556	68,734	68,471	69,303

Source: Connecticut State Department of Labor

Bethel shares in the region's economy by capturing some 6,900 jobs in 588 local establishments, or one-tenth of total employment paying over \$330 million in annual wages. While one third of Bethel residents worked in local establishments in 2000, fully four in every five resident workers were employed elsewhere, with roughly 30% of these in the City of Danbury and another 10% in the rest of the Danbury LMA.

Over the six year period, Bethel's share of the regional economy increased from 9 to 10% of total employment, as Table 2 shows. Among the regional growth sectors, the Town exhibits decided strength in Wholesale Trade and the Management of Companies, which each exceeded the average regional share in 2005. In contrast, the region's other leading and fastest growing sectors of Health Care, Retail Trade, Arts/Entertainment, and Educational Services are currently under-reported.

**Table 2: Local Employment Trends: Annual Shares of Regional Employment & Growth in Local Jobs of Bethel, 2000-2005**

	Average Annual Employment					
	Regional Shares			Bethel Employment		
	2005	2000	Diff	2005	2000	Diff
Construction	13.49%	12.45%	1.04%	476	388	88
Manufacturing	13.40%	15.31%	-1.91%	1249	1930	-681
Wholesale trade	13.49%	14.93%	-1.44%	362	330	32
Retail trade	7.51%	4.55%	2.96%	881	522	359
Transportation and warehousing	19.89%	16.26%	3.63%	211	204	7
Information	13.58%	10.38%	3.20%	188	230	-42
Finance and insurance	10.83%	8.89%	1.94%	292	241	51
Real estate and rental and leasing	14.97%	8.73%	6.24%	91	55	36
Professional and technical services	8.08%	6.36%	1.72%	202	182	20
Management of companies and enterprises	15.16%	1.25%	13.91%	440	35	405
Administrative and waste management	8.05%	6.34%	1.71%	249	222	27
Educational services	3.15%	1.52%	1.63%	25	10	15